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THE GULL



Golden Gate Audubon Society

Berkeley, California

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THE RANCH EXPANDS

Audubon Canyon Ranch has come a long way since its inception 24 years ago as a preserve for the herons and egrets that nest there. Thanks to the generosity of its benefactors, it has acquired holdings of great variety of habitat and richness of wildlife at Cypress Grove and Tom's Point on Tamales Bay and at Bouverie Preserve in Sonoma County.

Whether a frequent visitor or a stranger to these superb nature areas, you will have the chance to explore them with the experts. Come to our meeting at 7:30 on Thursday, March 13 at the Josephine Randall Junior Museum in San Francisco on Museum Way. Skip Schwartz, the general manager of ACR, and John Petersen, the new resident naturalist at Bouverie, will lead us on a lively tour there with slides and discussion. From Skip we'll learn how the egrets and herons are prospering at the rookery. John will summarize his thesis research at Bouverie on such bark-foraging birds as the Downy, the Nuttall's, and the Pileated Woodpeckers. We'll find out what protection Cypress Grove and Tom's Point offer for the habitat of such elusive waders as the Virginia Rail. As an additional treat, John has promised to display some of the artwork he did for Steve Granholm's recent book *Discovering Sierra Birds*.

— TOM WHITE

LATE NEWS: BIRD SEED SALE

For the first time GGAS will have seed available for sale in excess of that ordered and prepaid, and is announcing the sites of the sale. So come, won't you, to stock up on March 15th. This is an experiment, and an effort to enhance the fund-raising for the legal fund for Mono Lake. If possible, send your order by mail, but if you decide at the last minute, come to the sale. (See details, page 42.)

SAVE APRIL 26—
AUDUBON'S BIRTHDAY

In both the East Bay and San Francisco GGAS will be sponsoring birdathons. The National Audubon Mono Lake Defense Fund will be the recipient of the funds raised. Celebrate at the Birthday Bird Blitz.

THE CHRISTMAS COUNT REPORTS
APPEAR AT PAGE 35 IN THIS ISSUE

FIELD TRIPS CALENDAR

Saturday, March 1 — San Pablo and Briones Reservoirs. See February *Gull* for details.

Saturday, March 8 — San Francisco Bird Blitz. Participants in last year's blitz saw over 100 species within the City limits. This year's mad dash to build up the biggest "City Day List" possible will begin at **7 a.m.** sharp at the parking lot at Middle Lake near 41st Ave. and Lincoln Way. From there we will caravan to other sites including Sutro Baths, Lake Merced and Candlestick Point. Bring lunch and liquids. We will bird until dusk when we will adjourn to a nearby restaurant where for a minimal cost we can avoid going home to cook dinner. Leader: Alan Hopkins (664-0983).

Sunday, March 9 — Richardson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary Refuge. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the Audubon Center at the Sanctuary, 376 Greenwood Beach Rd. in Tiburon. From Hwy. 101 take the Belvedere-Tiburon exit, go east and turn right at the third traffic light: Greenwood Cove Rd. There should be about 7,000 to 10,000 birds on the water. We may be able to see courting Western Grebes. Bring a scope if you have one. Trip ends at noon. Leader: Meryl Sundove (388-2524).

Wednesday, March 12 — Mini-trip to Mitchell Canyon. We will meet at **9:30 a.m.** Take Hwy. 24 through the Caldecott Tunnel. At Walnut Creek take Ygnacio Valley Rd. Go about 5 miles, turn right onto Clayton Rd. Go about a mile, make a right turn onto Mitchell Canyon Rd. and go to the

parking lot at the end of the road. This is a delightful area with easy streamside walking and many songbirds. Bring your lunch. Wear shoes suitable for walking in mud. Rain cancels trip. Leaders: Delpha deTimofeev and Ruth Voss (525-8032).

Saturday, March 15 — Coyote Hills Regional Park and San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (SFBNWR). Meet at **9:30 a.m.** at the visitors' center. From Hwy. 17 exit at Jarvis Ave. and go north to Newark Blvd., or from the Alvarado West exit go to Newark Blvd. and turn south, follow the signs to the park. During the morning we will bird at Coyote Hills. After lunch we will caravan to the SFBNWR to see the exhibits at the visitors' center and look for birds in the adjoining area. Bring lunch, liquids and a scope if you have one. In case of rain, please contact the leader. Leader: Paul Covell (530-2513). (✓)

Sunday, March 16 — Tennessee Cove. This will be a two-mile walk to Tennessee Cove, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, to look for land and shorebirds, including White-throated Swifts. From San Francisco, from Hwy. 101 take Hwy. 1 exit toward the Mill Valley and Stinson Beach exit. In about one-quarter mile turn left onto Tennessee Valley Rd. Meet at the end of the road at **9 a.m.** Bring lunch. Leader: Betty Short (921-3020 work). (✓)

Saturday, March 22 — Beginners' Trip to Tilden Regional Park. Meet at **9 a.m.** at the Nature Center parking lot. From I-80 take University Ave. un-

til it ends at Oxford and turn left. Take Oxford to Rose and turn right. Proceed one block and turn left at Spruce. Cross Grizzly Peak and immediately turn left downhill on Canon Dr. At the bottom of the hill turn left and go to the parking lot at the Nature Center.

This field trip will concentrate on identifying birds of the chaparral, woodland and grassland areas of Tilden Park, Berkeley. We will see a variety of resident and breeding species and will listen for their sounds as an aid to identification. Bring binoculars and a field guide. Rain or serious threat of rain cancels trip. Leader: Robin Pulich (848-3594 evenings). (✓)

Sunday, March 23 — Sunol Regional Park. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** at the park entrance. Take I-680 south, turn off Calaveras Rd. (the freeway sign is marked Calaveras Rd., Dumbarton Bridge, Calif. 84), go south (left) and follow the signs to Sunol Park, about five miles. Bring lunch and liquids. Park regulations prohibit alcoholic beverages. We should see Golden Eagles, a variety of winter residents and early spring migrants. This trip is also good for wildflowers. Leader: Peter Allen (892-8063). (✓)

Sunday, March 30 — Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. We will meet at **9:30 a.m.** for the traditional Easter walk around the Chain of Lakes and the other lakes in the vicinity. There is a variety of waterfowl including Wood Ducks at this time of year. We also should see at least two varieties of hummingbirds. After the walk we will have a champagne brunch at a nearby restaurant (\$9-\$10). We will meet at 43rd Ave. and Fulton St. near North Lake (Chain of Lakes). Leader: Betty Short (921-3020 work-phone). (✓)

Saturday, April 5 — Bothe-Napa State Park. This is a particularly

beautiful park in the spring, with migrating warblers and vireos, Winter Wrens, wildflowers and, if we are lucky, Pileated Woodpeckers. We will walk about four to five miles and will bird mostly by ear. This trip is especially good for beginners. From the East Bay take I-80 north, turn off to Napa, following Hwy. 29 to St. Helena. The entrance to the park is on your left just past the Old Bale Mill north of St. Helena. From the West Bay, take Hwy. 101 north to Hwy. 37 near Novato, go east to the junction with Hwy. 121 (turn left at the junction) and follow 121 north and east to Napa where it joins Hwy. 29. Continue northwest to the park. Meet in the parking lot at **8 a.m.** Bring lunch and liquids. Rain cancels trip. Please carpool if possible. Leader: Gene Hull (525-6893). \$ (✓)

Sunday, April 6 — Alameda and San Leandro Shoreline. Meet at **8:30 a.m.** in Alameda, at Broadway and Shoreline Dr. We will bird the Elsie B. Roemer Bird Sanctuary and the San Leandro Bay Regional Shoreline. Toward the end of the day we will look for Burrowing Owls on Bay Farm Island. Be sure to bring lunch and liquids. We should see migrating shorebirds, many in breeding plumage. Bring a scope if you have one. Leader: Leora Feeney (522-8525). (✓)

Carpooling arrangements can be made for trips marked (✓). Call Kate Partridge at 236-7022 and leave a message. She will contact you.

Trips marked with a \$ go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee.

Problems: If for any reason you have difficulty getting in touch with a field trip leader or need information regarding a trip, call Shirley Kelly (387-8290) or the GGAS office (843-2222).

— FIELD TRIPS COMMITTEE

JANUARY OBSERVATIONS—

Through January 28

As is usual in mid-winter, most rarities remained at their sites of discovery for long periods, often more than the whole month.

WATER BIRDS

Fifteen Black-vented Shearwaters were still offshore from Monterey Jan. 26 (SJ). The female Tufted Duck at San Francisco Zoo Jan. 25-27 was not a captive and presumably occurred naturally (JM, et al.). A female **King Eider** found at Moss Landing Jan. 12 surprisingly only stayed another day (BG, FRC, DS). Single Harlequin Ducks were at Rodeo Lagoon through Jan. 25 (mob), at Bolinas Lagoon Jan. 1-26 (DQ, et al.), at Moss Landing Jan. 12-19 (AE, et al.), and Duncan's Landing, Sonoma Co., to Jan. 28 (RH). Over 60 Barrow's Goldeneyes were at the tidal gates of Belvedere Lagoon Jan. 18 (DH, GH, RH). Ordinarily a concentration this large is expected only at Lake Merritt.

About 510 Mountain Plovers northeast of Woodland Jan. 18 (DW) was a very high count even for this usual location. Two American Black Oystercatchers were at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza Jan. 12 (BW). A juvenal **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** seen Nov. 17 (PP) at Alviso was rediscovered Dec. 21 (PN) and still present through Jan. 5 (JM, et al.). Perhaps even more surprising than this bird's attempt to winter locally was the fact that it still wore its juvenal plumage. However, a check of the literature shows that post-juvenal molt is typically only beginning when Sharp-taileds reach their winter quarters. The only Rock Sandpiper inhabited

Princeton Harbor throughout the month (mob). Considering their near-absence earlier in the winter, the discovery of 5,500 Red Phalaropes offshore Monterey Jan. 19 and 3,000 there Jan. 26 (both SJ) was astounding. Where did these phalaropes spend the previous two months? What brought them? There was no significant "wreck" onshore.

The Parasitic Jaeger remained in the Charleston Slough area at least through Jan. 18 (WGB, et al.). There were two Little Gulls at the Stockton Sewage Ponds Jan. 10-27 (DY, et al.). Although two or three have occurred during previous springs, this is the first multiple sighting in winter. The Common Black-headed Gull remained there all month (DY, et al.). Mountain View's Glaucous Gull stayed at least to Jan. 21 (mob), but singles at the mouth of Scott Creek, Santa Cruz Co., Jan. 3 (DS) and at Moss Landing Jan. 12 (AE) were only reported one day.

LANDBIRDS

An adult male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** at The Cheese Factory south of Petaluma Jan. 5-28 (RS, mob) was presumed to be the same individual that wintered there last year as an immature. Single Red-naped Sapsuckers were in the Santa Clara Non-Sectarian Cemetery Dec. 29-Jan. 20 (SM, MM, mob), in Nicasio Jan. 5-10 (RS, et al.), and in Strybing Arboretum Jan. 20-25 (LE, et al.).

The **Willow Flycatcher** at the Watsonville Community Hospital Jan. 1-2 (DL, et al.) is probably the latest regional record. Virtually as rare was the **Bank Swallow** at Elkhorn Slough Jan. 1 (PM, BS). The **Bendire's Thrasher** near Lodi remained at least through Jan. 24 (mob). Immature Northern Shrikes visited Panoche

Valley Jan. 1-25 (SP, et al.) and Stafford Lake Jan. 5 (fide RS). A Warbling Vireo spent at least Jan. 1-19 at Watsonville Community Hospital (DL, SG, DSi, et al.).

Neary's Lagoon held its Prairie Warbler throughout the month (mob). Jan. 1 found an American Redstart along the lower stretch of the Pajaro River (fide DL). Watsonville Community Hospital had Summer Tanager and Western Tanager males Jan. 1-2, with the former still present Jan. 19 (DL, DSi, SG, et al.). Yet another December **Indigo Bunting** was an immature male on SE Farallon Island Dec. 13 (PRBO). The Island had its last Clay-colored Sparrow Dec. 5 and its last Lapland Longspur Dec. 9 (both PRBO). Eight Lapland Longspurs were still at Hayward Shoreline Jan. 4 (BR) and four at Menlo Park Bayfront through Jan. 19 (DW).

The last report of a Rusty Blackbird along Cloverdale Rd. came Jan. 2 (BMcI, MMcI). A Hooded Oriole brightened a feeder in Mill Valley Jan. 25 (KW). A "Bulloch's" Northern Oriole Jan. 2 rounded out the outstanding list of rarities at Watsonville Community Hospital (PM, BS). Two very small flocks of Evening Grosbeaks appeared: three at Pescadero Jan. 4 (PN) and five at UC Santa Cruz Jan. 6 (DS).

Observers: William G. Bousman, Debby Cotter, F. Rigdon Currie, Al Eisner, Lee Elias, Steve Getty, Betty Gross, Rob Haden (RHa), Robert Hogan (RH), David Holway, Alan Hopkins, George Hugenberg, Shearwater Journeys, Donna Lion, Bert McIntosh, Margaret McIntosh, Peter Metropulos, Mark Miller, Steve Miller, Jim Mintun, many observers (mob), Joseph Morlan (JM), Paul Noble, Point

Reyes Bird Observatory (Farallon report thanks to Jay F. Penniman), Peter Perrine, Steve Perry, David Quady, Bob Richmond, Barry Sauppe, Dan Singer (DSi), Richard Stallcup, David Suddjian (DS), Bruce Walker, David Wharton, Katherine Wilson, David Yee.

TIME FOR A CHANGE

After seven and one half years of monthly deadlines it is time for me to pass these observations summaries to another dedicated Bay Area birder. Since summer 1978 the increase in birders and bird reports has continued relentlessly. This is a very welcome trend, but it does magnify the work load of the Observations Editor, the Gull Editor (thank you Nancy Conzett and Don Sanford), and the Northern California Rare Bird Alert Compiler (thank you Joseph Morlan) through whom I received most of the reports. The explosion of pelagic bird trips and their exciting new discoveries are reasons why I am now Regional Editor for seabirds for the *American Birds* Middle Pacific Coast region. These duties together with my position at the California Academy of Sciences, my GGAS-affiliated work for the endangered California Least Tern, and now my service on the California Bird Records Committee mean that I can no longer write these monthly summaries and also have the time to go birding. Forgive me, but I have chosen birding.

Our selection for your next Observations Editor is Helen Green. All of GGAS must know that Helen has already served our Society in many capacities, most recently as our Membership Chairman. Besides being active in Bay Area birding, she has impressed us with her dedication to bird

study and attention to accuracy in recording observations, two essential qualities for this task. I am sure that Helen will bring her own improvements to this column, but please don't object if she decides to follow the established pattern for her first month or so. Be sure to give Joe and Helen your continued support by reporting all interesting observations promptly, with documentation when appropriate. Also, please report to your Regional Editors for *American Birds* and all very rare birds (fewer than five annually in California) to the new Secretary of the California Bird Records Committee, Don Roberson, 282 Grove Acre, Pacific Grove, CA 93950. Joe, Helen and I will be glad to answer your questions about these reporting procedures. Thanks again for the past seven and one half year's reports, all of them, not just those I was able to publish. Special thanks to Point Reyes Bird Observatory for the monthly reports from SE Farallon Island. I've learned much from writing this column, but I can't wait to become a Reader again, so that I can learn from a new perspective. Enjoy it.

— STEPHEN F. BAILEY,
retiring Observations Editor,
Dept. of Ornithology and Mammology
California Academy of Sciences
Golden Gate Park,
San Francisco, CA 94118
(report observations to Northern
California Rare Bird Alert
843-2211.)

Correction

Paul Covel's numbers in his article about bridging San Leandro Bay were a bit off: marshes shrank from 1,600 acres to 77 acres in fifty years (see page 18). He doesn't know how it happened, but he says his face is red. Mine, too, in this instance. Ed.

CONSERVATION NOTES

Public Land Use

The President's Commission on Americans Outdoors is instructed to hold hearings around the country and to report to the President on how our Public Lands should be used. How do you want them used? Do Off Road Vehicles (ORVs) turn you on? Does golf take precedence over wildlife habitat? These are questions to be answered. How they are answered depends upon us. You can write this commission and help to guide their report. The address is: The President's Commission on American Outdoors, P.O. Box 18547, Washington, DC 20036.

Here Is One Good Thing About April 15

It will take 89 lines before you can fill in your California Tax Form. On line 90 you'll find the Rare and Endangered Species Preservation Program. Your Federally tax-deductible donations to this Fund will help protect species and habitat from irreparable loss.

Let's Hear It For The Mountain Lion

The California Department of Fish and Game has prepared a plan to kill all mountain lions within the North Kings deer herd range in Fresno Co. beginning in 1986. Officials are calling for the annihilation of every mountain lion in the area and one half of those in adjacent lands. Because they move freely into vacated territories, hundreds will be killed over the next four years. And then they plan to apply this plan to other areas. Let the Fish and Game Commission know if you object to this hunting season for mountain lions.

CHRISTMAS COUNT 1985 RESULTS

OAKLAND

On Dec. 22 150 field observers and 17 feeder watchers combined efforts to tally 111,254 birds of 177 species on the Oakland Christmas Count. The results are in line with figures from recent counts. The number of observers is encouraging because it represents a reversal of the trend of reduced participation in the last few years.

There were two birds which haven't been seen on the count for the last 10 years and may be the first ever. They are the Sandhill Crane seen flying over Tilden Park and the American Black Oystercatcher found on the Albany landfill. As astonishing as the crane may seem, it was in fact part of a pattern with reports from the Mt. Diablo and Crystal Springs counts. The oystercatcher was not really a surprise because they have been spreading south from the Richmond Bridge area in the last few years and there have been recent sightings in Berkeley and Albany. It seemed just a matter of time before they would turn up on our count.

Other unusual birds included a Blue-winged Teal in San Leandro Bay, an Oldsquaw at the Berkeley Pier, 2 Peregrine Falcons, a Lesser Yellowlegs on Bay Farm Island, House Wrens in Albany and Tilden Park, a Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher in Tilden, and a Hermit Warbler at Upper San Leandro Reservoir. Documentation for these unusual birds has been submitted with the official report to National Audubon Society. The results are listed below. Thanks to all observers.

— JEFF GREENHOUSE

— NANCY CONZETT

— HELEN GREEN
co-compilers

SAN FRANCISCO

"The City" count was held Monday, Dec. 30. Early morning rains discouraged some, however, 61 birders got out in the field, and two others watched at feeders. Our species total of 162 was sprinkled generously with surprises and rarities. A Screech Owl in Golden Gate Park provided the first report of that species in over 20 years. In addition we added Barrow's Goldeneye, Rock Wren, California Thrasher and Black-throated Gray Warbler to the count list. Other highlights included Tennessee, Yellow and Hermit Warblers, Summer Tanager and Northern (Bullock's) Oriole. The count ended at 10:15 p.m. when species number 162, Virginia Rail, responded to a taped call. In total number of birds, this was our most successful count with 25,502 more than our previous high. In the count period birds included Cattle Egret, Merlin, and Surfbird.

The most significant trend seems to be the increase in numbers of scaup, Surf Scoter, Ruddy Duck and Mew Gull. Since coverage of the circle had been fairly uniform, increased numbers suggest either actual area wide population increases or population concentrations due to the storm which passed through that morning. The reduction in insectivores and some Fringillidae may suggest a limited food supply or it may be the result of early winter cold weather.

Thanks are due to our hardworking counters who logged 141.25 party-hours and 275.3 party miles. Special thanks too, to Donna Lion for her outstanding work in producing our count list, and to Alan Hopkins who spent hours assigning teams and directing the count-down. Hazel Houston did a great job with publicity and Yvonne Donner provided another great dinner.

In the table which follows bold face type indicates an unexpected high count or species, and asterisk indicates an unexpected low count.

SPECIES OAKLAND S.F.

Red-throated Loon	21	34
Arctic Loon	4	10
Common Loon	20	28
loon, species	2	7
Pied-billed Grebe	316	145
Horned Grebe	165	31
Red-necked Grebe	2	0
Eared Grebe	54	20
Western Grebe	154	496
(Western) Grebe	554	428
Western (Clark's) Grebe	72	12
Brown Pelican	1	1
Double-crested Cormorant	1490	200
Brandt's Cormorant	105	443
Pelagic Cormorant	18	21
American Bittern	0	2
Great Blue Heron	45	20
Great Egret	75	16
Snowy Egret	85	25
Cattle Egret	2	0
Green-backed Heron	2	5
Black-crowned Night Heron	71	59
Tundra Swan	18	0
Greater White-fronted Goose	221	0
Snow Goose	30	0
Canada Goose	2279	160
Wood Duck	21	5
(Green-winged) Teal	83	0
Mallard	1282	1124
Northern Pintail	1623	16
Blue-winged Teal	1	0
Cinnamon Teal	11	0
Northern Shoveler	758	21
Gadwall	181	12
Eurasian Wigeon	1	0
American Wigeon	1917	453
Canvasback	1137	194
Redhead	58	0
Ring-necked Duck	223	50
Greater Scaup	814*	2054
Lesser Scaup	4262*	2663
scaup, species	4936	121
Oldsquaw	1	0
Black Scoter	0	32
Surf Scoter	11,773	13,623
White-winged Scoter	49*	291
scoter, species	860	45
Common Goldeneye	529	74
Barrow's Goldeneye	36	2
Bufflehead	589	153
Hooded Merganser	4	0
Common Merganser	14	0
Red-breasted Merganser	81	13
Ruddy Duck	3528	2683
duck, species	32	400
Turkey Vulture	136	1
Osprey	2	0

Black-shouldered Kite	13	3
Northern Harrier	20	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	35	10
Cooper's Hawk	14	2
<i>Accipiter</i> , species	8	3
Red-shouldered Hawk	2	10
Red-tailed Hawk	117	47
Rough-legged Hawk	1	0
Golden Eagle (la, lu)	2	0
American Kestrel	74	61
Merlin	1	0
Peregrine Falcon	2	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	7	0
California Quail	189	116
Clapper Rail	6	0
Virginia Rail	0	1
Sora	4	2
American Coot	3451	1839
Sandhill Crane	1	0
Black-bellied Plover	2472	855
Snowy Plover	3	22
Semipalmated Plover	316	47
Killdeer	464	238
American Black Oystercatcher	1	5
Black-necked Stilt	63	15
American Avocet	963	282
Greater Yellowlegs	51	0
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	0
Willet	1072	499
Wandering Tattler	0	1
Spotted Sandpiper	30	5
Whimbrel	18	11
Long-billed Curlew	129	54
Marbled Godwit	411*	388
Ruddy Turnstone	7	17
Black Turnstone	38	50
Red Knot	56	11
Sanderling	1179	411
Western Sandpiper	7157	1311
Least Sandpiper	1921	65
Dunlin	3345	1895
peep, species	1622	0
Short-billed Dowitcher	437	41
Long-billed Dowitcher	1047	1
dowitcher, species	284	500
Common Snipe	32	19
Bonaparte's Gull	64*	12
Heermann's Gull	0	7
Mew Gull	544	5119
Ring-billed Gull	1496	220
California Gull	547	504
Herring Gull	29	43
Thayer's Gull	1	15
Western Gull	897	1842
W. x Glaucous-winged Gull	2	5
gull, species	682	1609
Forster's Tern	174	67
Common Murre	0	3
Rock Dove	1339	6833
Band-tailed Pigeon	292	33
Mourning Dove	980	788
Common Barn Owl	1	2

SPECIES	OAKLAND S.F.			
Western Screech Owl	4	1	Rufous-sided Towhee	311 25
Great Horned Owl	22	5	Brown Towhee	930 160
Burrowing Owl	9	0	Rufous-crowned Sparrow	35 0
Short-eared Owl	0	1	Lark Sparrow	13 0
Northern Saw-whet Owl	5	0	Savannah Sparrow	105 30
white-throated Swift	14	0	Fox Sparrow	139 191
Anna's Hummingbird	638	335	Song Sparrow	457 235
<i>Selasphorus</i> , species	0	1	Lincoln's Sparrow	8 7
Belted Kingfisher	13	7	White-throated Sparrow	1 0
Acorn Woodpecker	4	0	Golden-crowned Sparrow	1190 578
Red-breasted Sapsucker	29	2	White-crowned Sparrow	1954 1323
Nuttall's Woodpecker	62	3	sparrow, species	8 0
Downy Woodpecker	32	43	Dark-eyed Junco (intergrade)	1 0
Hairy Woodpecker	9	1	Dark-eyed (Slate-colored) Junco	1 1
Northern (Red-Shafted) Flicker	351	90	Dark-eyed (Oregon) Junco	1707 488*
Black Phoebe	90	74	Red-winged Blackbird	1042 355
Say's Phoebe	22	9	Tricolored Blackbird	60 950
Horned Lark	24	15	Western Meadowlark	463 181
Tree Swallow	0	2	Brewer's Blackbird	998 2241
Stellar's Jay	360	3	Great-tailed Grackle	0 1
Scrub Jay	634	66	Brown-headed Cowbird	16 180
American Crow	32	6	blackbird, species	453 0
Common Raven	14	22	Northern (Bullock's) Oriole	0 2
Chestnut-backed Chickadee	1205	254	Purple Finch	56 15
Plain Titmouse	165	0	House Finch	2067 1896
Bushtit	1938	422	<i>Carpodacus</i> , species	4 0
Red-breasted Nuthatch	145	4*	Red Crossbill	0 2*
White-breasted Nuthatch	16	228	Pine Siskin	192 22*
Brown Creeper	44	48	Lesser Goldfinch	299 1
Rock Wren	6	1	American Goldfinch	259 52
Bewick's Wren	140	20	House Sparrow	415 768
House Wren	3	2	Total Species	177 162
Winter Wren	38	48	additional races	2
Marsh Wren	3	21	hybrids	1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	159	97*	intergrades	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	731	226*	Total individuals	111,254 68,395
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	0	Total observers	167 63
Western Bluebird	218	0		
Hermit Warbler	166	71		
American Robin	6893	669		
Varied Thrush	280	19		
Wrentit	349	65		
Northern Mockingbird	41	11		
California Thrasher	30	3		
Water Pipit	78	65		
Cedar Waxwing	2447	73		
Loggerhead Shrike	17	9		
European Starling	4136	1609		
Hutton's Vireo	79	27		
Tennessee Warbler	0	2		
Orange-crowned Warbler	0	8		
Yellow Warbler	0	4		
Yellow-rumped Warbler	405	845		
Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler	7	39		
Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler	459	357		
Black-throated Gray Warbler	0	1		
Townsend's Warbler	71	91		
Hermit Warbler	1	1		
Common Yellowthroat	10	37		
warbler, species	1	0		
Summer Tanager	0	1		

SAN FRANCISCO BREEDING BIRDS

As part of a cooperative effort with the Marin Breeding Bird Atlas, GGAS is seeking records for breeding birds in San Francisco County. Please report observations of nests, nests with eggs, nests with young and adults feeding young. We need the date of observation, species name, exactly what was observed, the exact habitat and location, your name and phone number. Reports must be made in writing and may be sent to the G.G.A.S. office, 1550 Shattuck Ave., #204, Berkeley, CA 94709. For further information call Dan Murphy, 564-0074.

THE BACK YARD BIRDER

In 1980, N.F.R. Snyder warned in an overview of the California Condor conservation program that no more than 6 years may remain to reverse the trend in the decline in the population of these birds. This statement becomes prophetic considering the the 1986 death of a female condor, thought to be the last female of a known breeding pair of adults still in the wild. The problem of saving the condor from extinction has become a thorny one with knowledgeable people firmly entrenched in one of several solutions. I won't involve myself here with the relative merits of these plans, but wish to share the history of some bird species which have been lost to us forever.

Since the age of the dinosaurs came to a close, species of animals and birds have ceased to exist from all sorts of causes, many of them totally natural ones. Some animals, most of them primitive ones, simply disappeared as they outlived their usefulness. Unfortunately, the rate of disappearing species is increasing at an alarming pace due to the destruction of our planet's tropical forests and due to other manifestations of human technology. If not at least slowed, we will not only be deprived of the joy of a condor's majestic flight, but of the potential for human food, medical and other vital resources.

It was shocking to learn that since the beginning of the 18th century—less than 300 years ago—78 full species and over 50 subspecies of birds have disappeared. 35% of these extinctions took place between 1850 and 1900. A large number of these birds were island species which had evolved without human and other predators and quickly disappeared with the arrival of man

and his attendant army of rats and domestic animals—and his guns.

In North America, four species were lost between 1844 and 1918—and a subspecies was last seen in 1932. The Labrador Duck probably became extinct because of egg raids on its breeding grounds and hunting it for meat. The Great Auk, a remarkably tame as well as flightless bird, was easy prey for hunters. The Passenger Pigeon's extinction took place in just 20 years' time. It declined from flocks of millions due to merciless killings for food and "sport." Speeding its decline was the clearing of its forest habitat for farming. The Carolina Parakeet disappeared from the same deadly combination and was also considered a pest by farmers to grain and fruit crops. The Heath Hen, an eastern subspecies of the Greater Prairie Chicken, was a victim of shooting and the preferred food for domestic animals.

A few other species with a tenuous hold on existence are the American Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the Eskimo Curlew, the Bachman's and the Kirtland's Warblers and the Dusky Seaside Sparrow whose population contains only males. Some of these birds have not been seen for years and we can only hope that some survive away from civilization.

There are a few endangered species which seem to be making a comeback due to imaginative and herculean efforts. The banning of DDT has helped the Bald Eagle, but it is still threatened even where it is most abundant (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Minnesota and Michigan). The Whooping Crane has been saved from the brink of extinction for now. Because they lay 2 eggs but only successfully raise one young, beginning in 1967 a single egg was

removed from each nest and a foster parent, a Sandhill Crane, reared the young. In addition, valuable winter habitat was saved and the now-adult birds seem to be successfully rearing their own young. (A similar program is being done with the California Condor. They raise only one baby every other year, if they are lucky. The eggs are being harvested and hatched in captivity with the hope of releasing the birds back into the wild. But these birds face a lack of adequate habitat as well as the threat of lead-poisoning from eating the carrion animals shot by hunters.) With protection and the management of the wetlands, the Florida Everglade Kite, which feeds almost exclusively on freshwater snails, has been staging a good return to decent numbers. The Peregrine Falcon population is also growing due to the control of DDT and to the extraordinary captive breeding program based at the Laboratory of Ornithology at Cornell University, in cooperation with the National Audubon Society and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Although it lacks the grace and beauty of the Whooping Crane or the Peregrine Falcon, the thought of losing the California Condor forever is painful. Most of the success stories are the result of increased awareness by the public due to the efforts of many groups such as the Audubon Society. Let's hope the condor will be one more of those success stories.

— MEG PAULETICH

UC BERKELEY SERIES

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of the UC Natural Reserve System UC Extension will present "In Celebration of Nature", a five week series of lectures. On successive Wednesdays, beginning April 16 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Wheeler Auditorium, UC Berkeley. The series fee is \$40, single

admissions are \$9 if space is available. The first speaker will be Robert Bateman, widely acclaimed Canadian wildlife painter. For details and a brochure phone 642-1061.

PIEDMONT BIRDING CLASSES

Dr. Michael Perrone will again offer a birding class through Piedmont Adult School. The course, sponsored by GGAS, will focus on identification of landbirds by their behavior, habitat, appearance and voice. It includes six evening classroom lectures, illustrated with color slides, and several Saturday morning bird walks. Emphasis during walks will be on recognition of calls and songs. Bring a bird guide to class, preferably the National Geographic Society's guide (available through the GGAS office) or the Golden Guide by Robbin, et al. Field trip details will be announced in class.

For information, call the school, 653-9454 or 658-3679, day or night. The class starts Wednesday, April 16 and ends Saturday, May 24. It will meet at Piedmont High School, 800 Magnolia Ave. at 7:30 p.m.

"ETHICS AND THE ENVIRONMENT"

Coyote Point Museum, San Mateo (342-7755) is sponsoring a series of lectures that will explore values and ethics as related to ecological concerns. Speakers will address the development of environmental attitudes and how they are altered or perpetuated through literature, film, law, the press, religion and political practices. The series is made possible through a grant from the California Council of Humanities. Harold Gilliam, Chronicle environmental writer, will be moderator for the seven lectures which begin in March. The first will be Wednesday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m. The speaker will be Dr. Roderick Nash, UC Santa Barbara.

BIRDING SOUTHERN MEXICO

Howler monkeys and iguanas, strangler figs and gumbo limbo—a feast in the jungle? a hot new Mexican recipe? Wrong! These ingredients were just a small part of the flora and fauna seen by 11 bird-watching travelers led by Chris Carpenter, Lina Prairie and Steve Howell who journeyed to Oaxaca and Chiapas last November, 1985 for 16 fantastic days of intense birding.

We arrived in the City of Oaxaca after about 12 hours of air and airport time. There we were met by Lina and Steve, with a large van supplied with a driver, Jorge, who would accompany us throughout the trip. Jorge spoke no English, and, except for our leaders, most of us spoke poor or little Spanish, but by day two we were all communicating. By day five we were sharing our binoculars with Jorge, and by day 11 he began spotting hawks, eagles and other roadside birds. On the last day we gave him a field guide signed by all of us and watched him laugh over our attempts at Spanish inscriptions.

The 16 days included many varieties of habitat. Starting with the arid interior valley of Oaxaca (5000 ft. el.) and the humid pine-oak forest of La Cumbre (9000 ft. el.), we traveled through tropical semi-deciduous forests to the coastal plains of the Pacific. We then climbed up again to another interior valley, where we visited beautiful and historic El Sumidero Canyon. Then it was on to San Cristobal de las Casas (7000 ft. el.) for several days in the highlands of Chiapas.

One of the highlights of the trip was an overnight visit to the cloud forest at Montebello. We stayed at a hostel near the southern border of Mexico, with Guatemala just across the lake, and spent part of two days looking for the

elusive Resplendent Quetzal. Spartan bunks with warm blankets were provided in a dormitory-style arrangement, and food (chickens, eggs, fruit and cheese brought by our leaders) was prepared for us by the families which run the hostel. At the nightly bird count-down the families gathered around and listened to what we were doing. We showed them pictures of the birds we were talking about, and there was much whispering among them about where to find Tinamous, Quetzals and every other bird which had eluded us.

The last four nights of our trip were spent in a hotel near the Mayan ruins of Palenque, and our days were divided between birding the nearby rain forests and the Usumacinta flood plain. Almost $\frac{1}{3}$ of new trip birds were seen here.

I started off the trip with two divergent fantasies: (1) we would never see all of the wild and crazy birds with names such as Blue-crowned Motmot, Keel-billed Toucan, Double-striped Thick-knee, Cinnamon-bellied Flowerpiercer, or (2) lovely birds would simply falling out of the trees at our feet in such great numbers that identification would be impossible. I was wrong in both respects. We did see great numbers of birds with brilliant colors, impossible bills, unusual plumage and crazy names. But, except for a few instances, when Collared Aracaris, Montazuma Oropendolas, and Keel-billed Toucans clacked about overhead while Red-legged Honeycreepers, Yellow-throated Euphonias and Red-capped Manakins popped in and out of the understory, we had to work for the many species we finally did see. Our leaders were superb at taking us to the right spot, hearing what was there, and

spotting or calling out the many species which skulked in the undergrowth.

We reached Villahermosa, ready to board the plane for home, with over 420 collective trip bird species; over 175 of those were new (life) birds for me.

— HELEN GREEN

NEWS FROM THE RANCH

Audubon Canyon Ranch
Shoreline Hwy., Stinson Beach, (415) 383-1644
Wildlife Sanctuaries & Centers for Nature Education under joint sponsorship of Golden Gate, Madrone, Marin and Sequoia Audubon Societies
Flora MacIise, Chairman

This month the ranch opens its gates on another spring season of nature education classes at the Bolinas and Bouverie preserves. Schools and other education groups are welcome Tuesday to Friday by appointment.

On weekends and holidays the Bolinas preserve is open to the public from 10 AM to 4 PM from March first to the middle of July. The Madron Audubon Society will host during March. In April the Golden Gate Society will provide the weekend welcomes. Marin Audubon will host in May and Sequoia Audubon will cover June. The weekends in July will be shared.

Weekend visitors to Bolinas won't want to miss the new additions to the Zumwalt Gallery in the Wattis Building. There is a new feather exhibit, new photographs of the ranch's founders and long time volunteers as well as a story exhibit of how the ranch was rescued from development.

It's wildflower time! If you are eager to learn about them, but unsure how to go about it, Ray Peterson has the answer. Sign up for his personal introduction to spring wildflowers at Bolinas on April 12 and 13.

Or you might prefer a Banquet for the Senses on April 19 at the Bouverie Preserve. Phylliss Ellman, Ray Peterson and John Peterson will all be on hand to give you an unforgettable

experience.

If your photographs don't always turn out to be what you'd like, Ray will put the joy back in your photo taking on May 3 and 4. To sign up for any of these classes call 383-1644.

John Peterson, the educator-naturalist headquartered at Bouverie Preserve, is now working full time for ACR. Skip Schwartz, the ranch's general manager, said, however, that Peterson's many talents will not be confined to Sonoma, but used where needed.

NEW IN THE GGAS LIBRARY

Birds of the Great Basin: A natural history, by Fred A Ryser, Jr., University of Nevada Press, Reno, 1985. \$27.50 cloth, \$15.50 paper.

This is the second in a series of books on the natural history of the Great Basin. This book will prove invaluable for birders interested in the arid regions east of the Sierra Nevada. If nothing else, it is a very informative work and fun to read. This region bounded by the Sierra Nevada, the Snake River drainage, the Wasatch Mountains, and the northern edge of the Mojave Desert, is the northern half of the Basin and Range Province. There are no birds confined solely to this region; what makes it unique is the assemblage of species.

One of the best features of *Birds of the Great Basin* is the opening section where Dr. Ryser discusses the strategies for survival for animals and plants in this climatically rigorous region. The major portion of the book is taken up with species descriptions for all the birds known to inhabit the Great Basin. The text is accompanied by a series of stunning photographs and some wonderful drawings by Jennifer Dewey. Rather than mere descriptions of the birds, which as Dr. Ryser points out are readily accessible in the better field guides, the descriptions here are of the natural history of the birds. There

are also many quotations from the work of the great 19th-century ornithologist, Robert Ridgway. Finally, there is a section on finding birds in the Great Basin. This last section names a few of the more well-known birding spots but leaves most of the choice of site selection to the reader. Dr. Ryser invites us to explore the various mountain ranges and add to the knowledge of distribution patterns of Great Basin birds.

— JON ZABLACKIS

SFBBO BIRDING TOURS

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory has announced another year of birding tours. The first is Arizona at Easter, then Michigan in June, and others. Call Don Starks at (408) 371-9720 for brochure and further information, or write: 2076 Foxworthy Ave., San Jose, CA 97124.

MONO LAKE VISITS

GGAS members are cordially invited to visit the Mono Lake Committee's Visitor Center in Lee Vining and the Mono Basin. There are lakeside nature walks led by the State Tufa Reserve

staff (619-647-6331). The Visitors Center offers educational displays and a 20 minute slide show on Mono Lake. The committee recommends the nordic skiing available, and ski tours can be arranged if conditions are right. (619-647-6525).

SEED SALE DETAILS

The San Francisco sale will be March 15 at 657A South Van Ness Ave., between 17th and 18th Sts. The same day the Berkeley location is 1805 2nd St., between Hearst and Virginia. Volunteers will be there from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to serve you. There will be large signs identifying the sale.

In addition to the seed sale, we will have available GGAS T-shirts and National Geographic Field Guides and possibly some discounted and remaindered items.

Payment by check is preferred to minimize the making of change. To accommodate this larger sale more volunteers are needed. For information call the GGAS office, 843-2222.

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The Society welcomes gifts in general or gifts in honor of or in memory of relatives and friends. Such gifts will be used as specified by the donor or, if unspecified, at the discretion of the GGAS Board of Directors. This includes their use for general GGAS activities or for special programs of the Society including Audubon Canyon Ranch of which GGAS is a sponsor. Please send your gift in the form of a check made out to Golden Gate Audubon Society, 1550 Shattuck Ave., #204, Berkeley, CA 94709. All gifts are tax deductible. The Society is also appreciative of any bequests. Such bequests should specify as recipient the Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. All gifts, donations and bequests will be acknowledged in The Gull as well as personally on behalf of the Society by the Secretary.

GGAS BIRD SEED SALE

Here is your chance to order your supply of seed for the season. Persons ordering seed will be notified by mail of the pick-up point address before March 10.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

VOLKMAN WILD BIRD SEED — Premium mix composed of white and red millet and sudan grass screenings.
20 lbs. \$ 8.75
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Field Guide to the Birds of North America (Nat. Geographic) _____	\$16.95	
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Send address changes to office promptly; Post office does not forward *THE GULL*. Monthly meetings: second Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Joint membership — local and national \$30 per year (individual); \$38 (family); includes *AUDUBON* Magazine and *THE GULL*; to join, make checks payable to National Audubon Society and send to GGAS office to avoid delay in receiving *THE GULL*. Membership renewals should be sent directly to the National Audubon office. Subscriptions to *THE GULL* separately \$8 per year; single issues \$1. High school and college student membership \$18 per year. Senior citizen individual \$21, senior citizen family \$23. Associate Membership in Golden Gate Audubon Society, \$10 per year.

The Golden Gate Audubon Society, Inc. was established January 25, 1917, and became a chapter of National Audubon in 1948.

The Gull deadline is the first of the month for the following month, and July 15th for September issue.